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AGDA-A (M) (29 Jun 71) POR 6T-UT-704253

19 July 1971

SUBJECT: Operational Report Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 23d Artillery Group, Period Ending 31 October 1970 (U)

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1. The attached report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with para 4b, AR 525-15.
2. The information contained in this report is provided to insure that lessons learned during current operations are used to the benefit of future operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.
3. Information of actions initiated as a result of your evaluation should be forwarded to the Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, ATTN: FOR OT UT within 90 days of receipt of this letter.

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Verne L. Bowers
VERNE L. BOWERS
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

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10 November 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned of Headquarters, 23d Artillery Group, Period Ending 31 Oct 70, RCS-CSFCR-65 (R2) (U)

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1. (C) Operations: Significant Activities.

a. During the reporting period (1 August through 31 October), 23d Artillery Group continued to provide medium and heavy artillery fires in general support and general support reinforcing missions throughout Military Region 3, RVN. Group continued to occupy fire support bases along the border enabling these units to provide artillery support to ARVN units remaining in Cambodia.

b. Three artillery raids were conducted during this quarter. The raids, normally planned from one to three days in duration, were used to engage enemy targets previously out of range of Group artillery units and to demonstrate the fire power of heavy artillery to the ARVN. As an additional benefit, the artillery raids enhanced the unit's combat proficiency in reconnaissance, selection, and occupation of position. (RSOP).

c. There continues to be a need to employ artillery battalions as tactical headquarters. Battalions under the tactical control of the 23d Artillery Group have been oriented towards specific major maneuver units and their corresponding areas of operation (AO). This has been accomplished by assigning to these battalions operational control (OPCON) of other general support batteries located in their AO. This method of organization enabled 23d Artillery Group to focus its attention to the western and northern sections of Military Region 3 and Cambodia, while II Field Force Artillery, maintaining operational control of two medium and one heavy artillery battalions, is oriented in the southern and eastern sections of MR 3. Based on this concept, the task organization showing the disposition of the Group's medium units, as well as the heavy units OPCON to Group, is as follows:

23d Arty Gp

2-12 Arty
A/2-12
C/2-12
E/6-27 (OPCON)

6-27 Arty (OPCON)
A/6-27
C/6-27
B/2-12 (OPCON)
A/1-27 (OPCON)
258 Radar Det (OPCON)

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1-27 Arty

B/1-27

C/1-27

A/2-32 (OPCON)

B/2-32 (OPCON)

248 Radar Det (OPCON)

259 Radar Det (OPCON)

2-32 Arty (OPCON)

C/2-32

C/7-8 (OPCON)

246 Radar Det (OPCON)

1st GSR Det (OPCON)

2d GSR Det (OPCON)

II FFORCEV Arty

7-8 Arty

B/7-8

C/2-35 (OPCON)

2-35 Arty (OPCON)

A/2-35

B/2-35

A/7-8 (OPCON)

C/5-42 (OPCON)

5-42 Arty (OPCON)

A/5-42

B/5-42

d. The 23d Artillery Group has assumed responsibility for engaging the unmanned ground sensor targets in Cambodia detected by the 1st Cav Division (AM) and the 25th Inf Division sensor platoons. The sensors were originally positioned by the US divisions prior to their withdrawal from Cambodia. Sensor activations in Cambodia continue to be reported without delay to the appropriate battalion TCC where they are analyzed, converted to appropriate fire missions and sent to the firing battery within range of the sensor. This system of engagement has worked effectively during the reporting period, resulting in an average reaction time for all calibers of eleven minutes. Off set distances continue to be used to compensate for any delays during target engagement. Information concerning sensor activations is transmitted from the US Artillery TCC to the ARVN maneuver unit G2 for intelligence purposes. Unmanned sensors remain as a valid source of all weather target acquisition data in jungle areas where other means have proven ineffective. An additional benefit received from these sensor fields is the cumulative intelligence data that can be used to indicate any trend in enemy activities. To ensure their continued effectiveness, sensor fields should be rescoded periodically. Unmanned ground sensors are a reliable means of target acquisition and data obtained from them should be readily available to artillery units.

e. The 23d Artillery Group, in addition to using the agent reports provided by 525th Military Intelligence Group and which contained sufficient detailed information for fire planning, explored other available intelligence data to develop targets. Such targets have been developed by combining the information received from Red Haze, Sniffer, SLAR, and Y03A flights. II FFVA intelligence reports and 74th Aviation Company VR readouts have also been used to develop

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the best targets possible. These targets are engaged, once appropriate military and political clearances have been obtained. Follow-up surveillance continues to be difficult to acquire. Unless the enemy unit is already targeted, requests for maneuver unit surveillances are rarely satisfied, since there are no uncommitted ground forces available in the area.

f. Group fire support bases did not receive any ground attacks during the reporting period, however 29 enemy mortar and rocket attacks were initiated by hostile forces. The enemy continues to rely upon two basic methods of mortar attacks; fire-and-run and fire-and-hide. The AN/MPQ-4 Countermortar radar has been marginally effective against both methods of attack. At FSB Lanyard (XT 075849), the enemy employed the fire-and-run tactic. The AN/MPQ-4 radar, emplaced at Thien Ngon, 7 km to the south of FSB Lanyard, provides umbrella coverage of the base. The radar coverage of the Fire Support Base has the distinct advantage of including every firing point employed by the enemy against FSB Lanyard. If the radar crew does not detect the first ascending mortar rounds, the radar operator normally observed them on the descending leg of the trajectory near the defending area. Once detected, the firing position was located to an accuracy of 10M and immediate countermortar fire saturated the enemy position. This offset method of radar employment remains unfeasible at FSB Beverly (XT 333902). Due to the limited sector of scan, an aggressive intelligence effort must be incorporated by the FSB Commander to determine the likely mortar firing sites. When incoming fire was received but not detected by the radar, special emphasis was placed upon crater analysis to obtain at least the back azimuth of fire and the approximate range and type of weapon employed (usually 82mm mortar). Based upon the data developed, the radar scan sector was progressively refined to the point that most of the brief attacks were observed and backplotted. With either type of radar site, the Group's countermortar program remains that of: reflexive response against previous or suspected mortar positions; area suppression of the detected mortar location; and finally, deliberate destruction fire, adjusted onto the detected mortar location by radar spotting of each countermortar volley fired. Limited surveillance means rarely reveals the actual results of these countermortar efforts, but the long term enemy performance continues to indicate the actual effect achieved. In the case of FSB Lanyard, still no attack has emanated from the same grid twice; however, no enemy mortar rounds ever landed within the defended perimeter, either. The difficulty of locating each new firing position in the dense woods, coupled with the directional problem each time, seems to be too much of a disadvantage for the enemy mortarmen to overcome. In the case of FSB Beverly, enemy attacks accounted for 50% of the total attacks against Group. Personnel and equipment problems coupled with the need to locate the Q-4 radar at the base rather than at a location overlooking it has brought out the need for the development of an omniazimuth countermortar radar in cases where the radar unit must be collocated with the battery.

g. The Group has had highly favorable results with the AN/TPS-25 radar

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as an effective target acquisition device, particularly in open lowland areas such as that around FSB's Blue (XT258290) and Elsenberg (XT113495). It has been noted that in the initial employment of the AN/TPS-25 very few sightings are obtained. There is a tendency for about 5 - 10 days to elapse before several sightings are reported. Investigations into the reasons for the low number of pickups have not produced any satisfactory results, however, it is speculated that it may take an operator that amount of time to get both himself and the equipment properly oriented with respect to his new surroundings. The development of a personnel radar with a 6400 mil capability could alleviate this problem. Improved techniques of anti-personnel detection and engagement should be developed, to include means for more effectively detecting personnel target regrouping and withdrawal.

h. In October this unit was required to prepare detailed battery level MTOE's for subordinate units. The detailed MTOE's were prepared from DA approved summary MTOE's within the framework of a unit's basic TOE with DA published changes. The purpose of the MTOE is to provide each Arty unit with a basic authorization document and to establish quantitative and qualitative data on personnel and equipment for the Army force structure. The MTOE is also used in data banks for planning and resource control purposes. At a later date, the detailed MTOE's will be returned to the units for updating. On the update MTOE, the units will make changes to the detailed MTOE. Changes in the total number of personnel and changes in the equipment type or quantity will be justified. The update MTOE, when approved by DA, will be the official MTOE authorization document for the units concerned.

i. In order to both emphasize and simplify the stringent requirements of the comprehensive Available Supply Rate (ASR) for artillery ammunition, 23d Artillery Group has been allocating the monthly ammunition to the commanders of the major supported maneuver units. By means of the 23d Artillery Group's daily SITREP, each major maneuver commander is well aware of the quantity, type, and caliber of artillery ammunition his unit has used, as well as the amount of ammunition remaining. To date there has been no instance of excessive ammunition expenditure under this system. If this system is adopted elsewhere, it is essential that the headquarters managing the ammunition ensure that once ammunition is allocated to a major maneuver unit, the unit maintains at least that amount for the entire period. This would preclude any wasteful expenditure of ammunition in an attempt to fire at exactly the ASR, thus being assured of receiving an identical amount for subsequent period. Group has exploited this premise by judiciously managing its total ammunition allocation based on operational plans, the tactical situation, and past experience.

j. The Group continues to participate in the Artillery Dong Tien (Forward Together) Program at a reduced level due to the increased operational commitments of both US and ARVN units. The program remains particularly successful in the area of combined unit refresher training. Instruction has included training in fire direction, firing battery, survey, maintenance, and communication. The Group has also been active in: (1) broadcasting Net

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messages in both English and Vietnamese; and (2) calibrating the artillery tubes of the 5th ARVN Division. Thus far 20 tubes have been calibrated with more scheduled to be calibrated in the near future.

k. The Group continues to operate a combined US/ARVN Fire Support Coordination Center (CFSCC), Artillery Air Strike Warning Control Center (AASWCC) in Binh Duong Province. The CFSCC provides fire support coordination and back-up air warning for all US and ARVN ground, naval and air forces operating within the province. The AASWCC provides aircraft flying within the Province's airspace warning of impending air and artillery strikes. In addition, US responsibility for five CFSCCs and AASWCCs throughout MR3 was assumed by the Group in Tay Ninh (1-27 Arty), Binh Long (6-27 Arty), Phouc Long (2-12 Arty), Xuan Loc (2-35 Arty) and Bien Hoa (5-42 Arty) provinces. Personnel and equipment were used from within the Group's organic battalions. Although taxing the battalions' assets considerably, the commitments were satisfied and the facilities are fully operational. With the CFSCCs/AASWCCs collocated at the Province Headquarters, it is anticipated that the ARVN will eventually assume responsibility for these facilities after attaining the required proficiency through on-the-job training (OJT).

1. A summary of the operational activities of 23d Arty Group is indicated below:

(1) Enemy continues to be reluctant to engage FWMAF in decisive combat. Thus, Group activities have been in response to firing on ground sensors both within RVN and inside Cambodia; targets developed by S2 targeting element; targets in support of ARVN operations; and targets provided by USAF Forward Air Controllers (FAC). Although lack of enemy activity has correspondingly resulted in less ammunition expenditures, Group gunners still acquired noteworthy results with:

KBA (Confirmed)	17
KBA (Probable)	12
WIA	2
Bunkers destroyed	88
Bunkers damaged	14
Huts destroyed	18
Huts damaged	31
Buildings destroyed	10
Cache destroyed	2
Tunnel uncovered	1
Secondary explosions	8
Sustained fires	4
Trucks destroyed	2
Rice destroyed	200 lbs

(2) In the Group's efforts to use all facets of target acquisition means, coordination has been completed with Forward Air Controllers

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operating from Tay Ninh and Song Be, RVN. Early results of this new acquisition means resulted in 10 missions with 375 rounds expended; eight of the ten TAC missions were fired in the last two weeks of the period. An aggressive program has been initiated to ensure this method of target acquisition is exploited even further. To date the following indicates the results of the program:

KBA (Confirmed)	6
KBA (Probable)	12
WIA	2
Bunkers destroyed	22
Bunkers damaged	9
Huts destroyed	14
Huts damaged	21
Buildings destroyed	5
Cache destroyed	1
Tunnel uncovered	1
Secondary explosions	4
Sustained fires	2

(3) Group participates in a program whereby three assigned air observers (AO) fly daily with 74th Aviation Company and perform visual reconnaissance (VR) and adjust fire on targets of opportunity. The program was initiated on 30 October, and further analysis of the program will be made next reporting period.

(4) The Group exercised 58 unit displacements during the period. Although a majority of the displacements were made in support of tactical operations, several were conducted to ensure that general support artillery units maintained a high degree of professionalism in motor marches and reconnaissance, selection, and occupation of position (RSOP).

(5) Group was alerted on 16 October 1970 to standdown the 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery effective 1 November 1970. Preliminary conferences were arranged between key personnel from Group Headquarters, Battalion Headquarters, 1-27 Artillery batteries and Keystone Robin project personnel. Detailed, preliminary coordination was completed on 31 October 1970 and the standdown is expected to be accomplished according to schedule.

(6) Group initiated an aggressive program to employ TOT's whenever the situation dictated. This resulted in immediate saturation of the target area thereby maximizing results and in convincing the ARVN of the importance of artillery on the battlefield. Massed fires were provided by as many as 3 heavy batteries and 2 medium batteries.

(7) Battery C/2-35 was released from OPCON II FFV Artillery and became OPCON 23d Artillery Group on 26 October 1970. The battery made a

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road march from FSB Blackhorse to FSB Beverly covering 120 road miles. The portion of the move from Tay Ninh to FSB Beverly was conducted over extremely difficult road conditions. It is in keeping with the highest traditions of the field artillery that the move was made with the unit intact. Adequate support was provided during the latter part of the road march by elements of the 25th Inf Div.

(8) Personnel from E/2-35 Arty were awarded 4 Silver Stars for the unit's action during an enemy assault on FSB Rising Sun. Such heroism and devotion to duty are indicative of the morale and esprit de corps of Group personnel.

(9) Group was tasked to provide two forward observer (FO) teams to TF 333 to determine why this unit did not use all the artillery support available to it and to encourage the Task Force to use more artillery. The following observations were made by the Group FO's:

(a) ARVN Commanders have felt the liberal use of artillery was indicative of hesitancy to close with and destroy the enemy. This attitude may be the reason for the reluctance to use reconnaissance by fire and to engage small VC elements with artillery.

(b) ARVN Commanders have great faith in gunships. Even if the gunships do not fire they were considered valuable in that they frightened the VC and forced them to keep their heads down while contact was being broken.

m. Separate reports for each of the organic battalions of the Group contain a detailed chronology of their activities during the reporting period. On 26 August 1970 C/7-8 Arty became OPCON to the 23d Artillery Group, while OPCON of E/7-8 reverted back to II FFORCEV Arty. The 2-32 Arty and 6-27 Arty remained under the operational control of Group throughout the reporting period. The ORIL of these units has been forwarded separately as organic units of II FFORCEV Arty.

n. Ammunition Expenditures (1 August through 31 October 1970)

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>NR MISSIONS</u>	<u>CALIBER</u>	<u>ROUNDS EXPENDED</u>
2-12	5216	155mm	22,609
1-27	3159	155mm	18,859
2-35	3355	155mm	8,249
5-42	1723	155mm	12,533
2-32	4735	{ 8"	6,385
		{ 175mm	7,276
6-27	4722	{ 8"	4,338
		{ 175mm	6,363
C/7-8	960	{ 8"	2,776
		{ 175mm	906
TOTAL	23850		89,388

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c. Personnel Significant Activities:

(1) Casualties: There were 0 KIA and 4 WIA in this quarter. Non-hostile casualties: There were 1 death and 61 injuries in this quarter.

(2) At the close of the period, the following critical personnel shortages existed:

<u>MOS</u>	<u>AUTH</u>	<u>ASG</u>	<u>POI</u>
05B20 Radio Operator	8	2	25%
13B20 Field Arty Crewman	72	37	51%
13E40 Chief FDC Computer	44	16	31%
13Z50 Field Arty Cannon Sr SGT	32	21	68%
31G50 Tactical Communications Chief	5	2	40%
71T20 Maint Data Clerk	21	5	24%

p. Intelligence:

(1) Visual Reconnaissance: As of 17 Sep 1970, the 74th Aviation Company began allocating 24 hours flying time per day to the Group, rather than allocating four aircraft per day. These 24 hours were intended to support all of the Group's assigned and attached battalions. As of 21 Sep 1970, the number of hours allocated was increased to 30, however, at the same time the Group assumed the responsibility of scheduling aircraft for one additional battalion, the 7th Battalion, 8th Artillery. All supported battalions flew a total of 560 visual reconnaissance missions during the period, compared to 275 missions flown by the Group during the previous quarter.

(2) Radars: The Group assumed the operational control of the 258th Radar Detachment (AN/MPQ-4A) and the 234th Radar Detachment (AN/TPS-25) on 14 August 1970 and 13 September 1970, respectively. The Group relinquished operational control of the 2d Ground Surveillance Radar Section on 8 September 1970, but reassumed control of the same section on 19 October. The AN/MPQ-4 radar detachments located 33 mortar/rocket firing positions during the quarter. The AN/TPS-25 radar detachments located 503 targets, 144 of which were engaged with fires of 23d Artillery Group units. Total downtime for all radars was 493 hours, while total operating time consisted of 1705 hours.

(3) Sensors: The Group continued its program of engaging sensor activations on a near real time basis. During the quarter, 359 sensor activations were passed to Group units as targets of opportunity, with 263 of these activations being engaged by artillery. The remaining activations were not engaged due primarily to aerial clearances to fire.

(4) During the quarter, the Group S2 section began operating on a

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24 hour per day basis. The principal reason for this was to support an expanded targeting effort. Arrangements were made to obtain input of intelligence information from several new sources such as various INTSUMS, Red Haze, CICV overlays, special study terrain analyses and agent reports.

q. Logistics:

(1) Normal supply and logistic support was provided to four 155 mm battalions. Limited logistic support was provided two OPCON 8"/175mm battalions. An average of 1 fixed wing and 5 rotary wing resupply sorties were flown daily.

(2) Tay Ninh Base Camp was turned over to ARVN during the month of August. US logistical support units pulled out of Tay Ninh in August necessitating the establishment of Class I and Class V throughput to two battalion forward supply points at Tay Ninh. Class III at Tay Ninh is provided by ARVN.

(3) Quan Loi Base Camp was turned over to ARVN during the month of September. Throughput has been established from Long Binh to Quan Loi to provide Class I and Class V. Class III for artillery units in Quan Loi and FSB Wade is being provided by 3/17 Cav Class III point at Quan Loi.

(4) Daily hook of Class I from Tay Ninh to FSB Lanyard and Beverly was initiated in late August. Approximately 2400 lbs of ice was also being hooked into each location daily.

(5) The emphasis on resupply by road where possible was put into effect in September. Hook and fixed wing sorties were reduced due to standdown of aircraft. II Field Force Artillery is guaranteed only 3 hours CH47 blade time per day.

(6) Dedicated C7A sorties were initiated in late September to provide daily Class I resupply as well as personnel and general cargo transportation to Bu Dop, Duc Phong, Snuffy, and Song Be.

(7) Parts for artillery, combat support vehicles, and over 5kw generators continue as critical supply items during the quarter. Emphasis was placed on first and second echelon maintenance and controlled cannibalization to alleviate the parts shortage.

(8) During the quarter the ordnance Repair & Return (R&R) program for heavy artillery was emphasized and the R&R program for medium artillery was updated.

(9) M548 cargo vehicles and 10 KW generators were added to the Commander's Critical Items List. M548 status is reported daily to higher headquarters.

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(10) Group units received three new M109 howitzers as replacements for retrograde weapons during the quarter.

(11) The two medium self-propelled battalions have a total of 17 M109 howitzers on hand that meet or exceed retrograde criteria.

(12) Since the 548th Maintenance Company at Tay Ninh closed operations in July, maintenance support for Tay Ninh area was transferred to 94th Maintenance Company at Cu Chi.

(13) During the quarter, one battery received a USARV CMMI. The rating was satisfactory.

(14) The Group Material Assistance Team was dissolved during the quarter. Personnel from the team were used to organize a II Field Force Artillery Logistic Readiness Assistance Team.

r. Aviation:

(1) The 23d Artillery Group Aviation Section continues to operate the consolidated OH58A assets of II Field Force Artillery.

(2) In addition the Aviation Section schedules two dedicated UH-1's. These aircraft are programmed for the Battalions on a mission sortie basis only.

(3) The breakdown of mission sorties flown by the 18 organic OH58A's is as follows:

Command and Control	1,354
Visual Reconnaissance	147
Troop Carrier	5,453
Training	324
<u>Maintenance</u>	<u>421</u>
Total Mission Sorties	7,699
Total Passengers	8,611
Total Cargo	111.8 Tons

s. Medical:

(1) During the quarter there was a 6% decrease in respiratory disease and 3% decrease in dermatological conditions as compared with the second quarter.

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(2) Venereal Disease increased 22% during the quarter as compared with the previous quarter. During the next quarter, greater continued emphasis will be placed on education of the troops to the hazards of venereal diseases.

(3) Seven cases of malaria were reported as compared with one for the previous quarter. The increase can be explained by the increased mosquito population during the monsoon season. Five out of seven cases were due to falciparum malaria.

c. Civil Affairs:

During the past quarter 65 MEDCAPS were conducted with a total of 4,560 patients treated. Separate institutions assisted during the reporting period were as follows:

Schools (4)

Hospitals/Dispensaries (4)

Boy Scout programs (1)

u. Signal:

To maintain communications with the assigned and OPCON battalions, the communications relays established on the three highest mountains in the Third Military Region, Nui Ba Den (XT281528), Nui Ba Ra (YT183068) and Nui Chua Chan (YT606101) receive maximum usage. Their use greatly assisted the FM communications of the Group units. The Group continues to make effective use of its automatic secure relays at these sites.

2. (C) Lessons Learned: Commander's Observation, Evaluation, and Recommendations.

a. Personnel. None

b. Operations.

(1) Use of Safety Grids on Ground Assault Preparation Missions.

(a) OBSERVATION: On 13 Oct 70, C/2-12 received a request to fire a Ground Assault Preparation (GAP) mission in which 60 rounds were to be expended. The adjustment phase was initiated at 1023 hours and completed at 1025 hours. A ten minute countdown was started. C Battery was required to have first rounds on target at H-6 minutes with last round impacting at H-1 minute. An ARA preparation was scheduled to begin immediately after rounds complete, during which the ARA Battery was to expend 50% of their Class V prior to the insertion of troops at H-hour. The mission progressed as

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planned until Gun #4 reported a misfire at -2 minutes and 15 seconds. At H-1 minutes and 45 seconds it was reported that the primer had fired. The mission was continued with Gun #4 called out of action. The final white phosphorous round had been fired which signalled the ARA to be in attach on the landing zone. The correct safety procedure to be followed if the primer fails is to wait 10 minutes, open the breech and remove the defective propellant charge for disposal. The Battery Commander's decision was to remove the propellant charge immediately to prevent a hang-fire or delayed firing which could have endangered both the ARA Battery or the troops being inserted.

(b) EVALUATION: The decision made by the Battery Commander to remove the propellant charge prior to a 10 minute waiting period could have been dangerous to the cannoneers involved.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: Prior to firing a GAP mission, a safety grid should be cleared considering the locations of friendly troops and the flight path to be followed by the ARA Battery. Firing data to this safety grid should be computed and sent to all guns. If a misfire occurs, the gun should be shifted to the data provided for the safety grid and normal misfire procedures followed. This procedure would eliminate the hazard of removing a defective propelling charge within 10 minutes of primer failure. Flight crews should also be briefed on the location of the safety grid to ensure that all aircraft are clear of this azimuth of fire, should its use become necessary.

(2) Advance Clearing Parties for Displacing Batteries.

(a) OBSERVATION: When a 155mm towed howitzer battery is required to occupy an abandoned fire support base, the operation should be preceded by an advance clearing party 24 hours prior to occupation.

(b) EVALUATION: The advance clearing party should consist of sufficient personnel and equipment to remove all mines and booby traps from the area to be occupied by the unit. This could essentially eliminate any danger to personnel and equipment upon occupation of the position.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That an advance clearing party precede the occupation of an abandoned Fire Support Base.

(3) Exercising Self-Propelled (SP) Howitzers M109

(a) OBSERVATION: During this reporting period, the heavy monsoon rains restricted the unit's ability to exercise the SP howitzers over any appreciable distance. Whenever the unit was directed to displace on either a tactical or administrative move to a new FSB, the equipment failure, especially of the M109, was excessive. This hampered coordination and movement of the units involved.

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(b) EVALUATION: A major factor in this equipment failure was the fact that many of these vehicles were not driven for any appreciable length of time. Vehicles that moved regularly had a lower percentage of equipment failure.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS:

(1) The importance of operator and organizational maintenance continue to be stressed at both battery and battalion level.

(2) A program instituted whereby each howitzer will be exercised over approximately a two-mile course each week.

(4) Towing Disabled Self-Propelled Howitzer M109.

(a) OBSERVATION: Towing a disabled M109 over relatively smooth roads with an empty 5-ton truck or wrecker and a heavy tow bar can be more effective and more mechanically sound than using another M109.

(b) EVALUATION: If a breakdown of one howitzer occurs, experience has shown that even by disconnecting the final drive and using a tow bar, the howitzer that is used to pull the disabled howitzer will experience mechanical difficulties. These difficulties, primarily occurring in the cooling system and transmission, can be directly attributed to the use of another M109 pulling the disabled M109. If the 5-ton truck or wrecker and tow bar are available, they can accomplish the task without risk of losing another self-propelled howitzer. The only difficulty that might be encountered is the possible breakage of the tow bar when traversing deep ditches or mud holes on unimproved roads or fields.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS:

(1) Use the wrecker or 5-ton truck wherever possible to move a disabled M109 after the appropriate preparations have been made, i.e. disconnecting the final drive.

(2) The heavy duty tow bar should be added to the battery MTOE. A recommended MTOE is being submitted through channels under separate cover.

(1) OJT Program for Junior NCO's.

(a) OBSERVATION: The inexperience of the junior NCO could be eliminated with a counselling program, drawing on the experience of the senior NCO's.

(b) EVALUATION: Inexperience of young section chiefs tends to

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develop many problems of leadership. If a man does not know what to expect or what to ask for from his men, it is quite difficult to demand much from them. This inexperience, coupled with a certain lack of knowledge, produces problems that might not otherwise arise with a man of more experience. Maintenance problems arise because the men are not properly supervised when their daily maintenance checks are performed. Crews lack a sense of urgency on an immediate fire mission because the man in charge cannot handle his men or just does not realize the potential that is available to him, especially under combat conditions.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: Junior NCO's be counselled daily by an experienced chief of section for 2 or 3 weeks during which the younger NCO can gain much needed experience.

(2) Use of Proven Artillery Doctrine.

(a) OBSERVATION: Cannoneers engaged in firing combat support missions for an extended period of time become lax in accomplishing individual duties and tend to seek shortcuts which detract from rapid and accurate artillery fires. Although the chief of section supervises and commands his section and is responsible for ensuring that all personnel perform their duties properly, the techniques that result in rapid and accurate artillery fires are sometimes overlooked while firing combat missions.

(b) EVALUATION: More timely and accurate fires can be achieved with the 155mm Howitzer M114A1, if all procedures listed in TM 6-81 are strictly adhered to.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That at least one hour each day continue to be devoted to Section Drill and Duties in Firing to reinstill in each individual the duties learned previously at the Field Artillery School. Dry missions are necessary to maintain the status of the section training, even in the combat zone.

d. Intelligence. None

e. Logistics.

(1) Need for a Container to Sling Load Perishable Items.

(a) OBSERVATION: Conex containers are not aerodynamically suitable for sling load by CH47.

(b) EVALUATION: There is a definite need for a container to be made available for sling loading Class I perishable items. The A-22 bag is unacceptable due to its lack of insulation and internal load shift. The

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- Conex Container meets the requirements of the using unit but causes extreme vibration to the CH47 in flight. Due to the vibrations, the aircraft can only safely fly at speeds up to 30 Knots.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That a container be built which meets both the requirements of the using unit and aviation.

(2) Need to Establish Maintenance Priorities.

(a) OBSERVATION: Repair parts and 3d echelon maintenance priorities have not been established by unit in II Field Force.

(b) EVALUATION: There is a need to provide specific guidance to direct support maintenance units as to which II Field Force non-divisional unit is to receive what priority for repair parts and maintenance support. The non-divisional maintenance battalions are now using the following system as guidance for job order work: The unit having the oldest job order and highest priority is given first consideration on repair parts and 3d echelon maintenance. The present system is unacceptable because it does not take into account type of unit, location or combat mission. Consequently a car company in Long Binh could have a 10KW generator repaired before an artillery battery at an outlying fire base.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That II Field Force in coordination with USARV, establish repair parts and maintenance priorities for non-divisional units.

f. Organization.

(1) Establishment of a CFSCC/AASWCC.

(a) Observation: On 3 Sep 70, 2d Battalion, 12th Artillery received a mission to establish a CFSCC/AASWCC at the MACV Compound, Song Be, Vietnam. Personnel and equipment were drawn from organic resources to initiate the operation, and a request submitted through channels for 180 day loan of the required equipment. The CFSCC functioned as a clearance agency for all supporting fires and as an information center providing the location and firing capabilities on all artillery units within its area of operational responsibility. The AASWCC served to provide artillery warning data on request to aircraft flying through its area of operational responsibility.

(b) EVALUATION: The CFSCC/AASWCC has developed into a highly successful operation in a short period of time.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That the following personnel and equipment combination comprise a cellular organization to satisfy future CFSCC/AASWCC requirements.

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(1) Personnel:

OIC - Captain O-3
2 Shift Supervisors - SGT E-5
3 CFSCC RTO's - SP4 E-4
3 AASWCC RTO's - SP4 E-4

(2) Equipment

4 ea Antenna RC-292
5 ea Radio Set AN/VRC-46
1 ea Radio Set AN/VRC24
1 ea Generator Set 1.5 KW AC

(3) Under combat conditions the CFSCC should operate two, twelve hour shifts while the AASWCC should operate three eight hour shifts, due to the heavy volume of traffic encountered during each shift. The additional CFSCC RTO can be cross trained in both CFSCC/AASWCC duties and can be used in either operation in a relief or replacement status. All personnel can be cross trained in both CFSCC/AASWCC duties.

(2) Combating Drug Abuse.

(a) OBSERVATION: In recent months there has been much interest Armywide in the problems of dangerous drugs and drug abuse. There has been particular focus on the problem as it exists in the Republic of Vietnam. During the months of August and September an extensive program was undertaken in the Group to investigate the extent of drug abuse within the command and to devise plans to alleviate the problem. First informal discussions were held with the troops to determine the extent of drug use in the units. It was found that there was frequent use of marijuana with between 10% and 30% of the troops in every battery of at least one battalion using marijuana on a more or less regular basis. It was also discovered that cocaine and heroin were readily available to the troops, especially in the Phu Loi and Bu Dop areas, and that these drugs were being used by some of the troops. With these facts as a basis an attempt was made to further analyze the cause of the problem. Several discussions with the users were conducted both on an individual basis and in small groups. The following points quickly became clear.

(1) Marijuana and harder drugs were freely available in Vietnam.

(2) There was little knowledge about these drugs, their effects and dangers, either in the enlisted or officer ranks.

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(3) There was general acceptance of the use of drugs and general apathy toward any dangers involved.

(4) Leadership was lacking from the junior NCO ranks regarding this problem.

(5) Boredom, too much free time, especially in the evening hours, and general lack of constructive activity were listed as conditions leading to drug use.

(6) Relief from anxieties and problems could be attained through drug use.

(7) There was little knowledge or fear of the legal penalties imposed for drug possession or use.

(b) EVALUATION: Through investigation, one battalion (2-12 Arty) was able to confirm what was already common knowledge, that dangerous drugs are available and are in common use among the troops in Vietnam. The usage within the Group's units is probably on par with other units in Vietnam, both as to type of drugs used and frequency of use. Several interesting and pertinent facts were uncovered (as listed under Observations) and herein lies the possible solution. General lack of knowledge among both enlisted men and officers, apathy toward the problem and its possible dangers and lack of any fear of punishment all foster tacit acceptance of the problem. Boredom, relief of anxiety and being a part of the crowd seem to lead to the use of drugs. After isolating the problem, active steps were taken to try and alleviate it. Classes and discussions were carried out for the enlisted men, NCO's and officers to disseminate information concerning the use of drugs, to include their effects and dangers on the individual. These discussions were eagerly received and aroused much participation and many questions. The amnesty program was fully explained to all groups and emphasis was placed on the help readily available. The penalties involved in being caught with the possession of drugs or in the act of using drugs were explained. Within the first two weeks following the onset of the program five men presented themselves for treatment under the amnesty program. For the remainder of the reporting period a total of eight men presented themselves for treatment under the amnesty program. Through a combined effort of the one battalion commander, his battalion surgeon and the psychiatric facilities of the 93d Evac hospital four of these men are no longer using drugs and have returned to full duty. The fourth man returned to the United States on emergency leave not related to his use of drugs and no follow up is available. In general, the program to date has been reasonably effective.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS: The following recommendations are presented as guides in evaluating and alleviating the drug abuse problem.

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(1) A thorough and careful study must be undertaken to ascertain the scope of the drug problem within any given area.

(2) A program of instruction must be undertaken to acquaint all enlisted personnel and officers with the uses, effects and dangers of these drugs.

(3) Free discussion must be available at all levels to bring this problem into the open.

(4) The amnesty program must be publicized and fully implemented to assist those desiring help.

(5) Junior NCO's must be made aware of the problem and provide leadership to their men.

(6) Activities must be fostered to fill time in the evening hours to alleviate boredom and reduce anxieties. Activities involving physical exertion would best achieve this goal.

(7) All persons involved must be made aware of the legal implications and penalties involved with possession and use of illegal drugs.

(8) Efforts must be made to control the traffic and sale of illicit drugs to military personnel.

(9) Commanders at all levels must be made aware of the problem and knowledgeable as to its causes and possible cures.

g. Civil Affairs.

(1) Greater Involvement in the MEDCAP Program by the Vietnamese.

(a) OBSERVATION: Vietnamese Medical personnel are not assuming enough responsibility for the MEDCAP program.

(b) EVALUATION: The Vietnamization program must include the assumption of responsibilities for Civic Action by the Vietnamese. This is particularly important in the area of medical Civic Action. Long term, recurring treatments are required for many ailments and, should the MEDCAP program end with the loss of direct U.S. support, long term patients will suffer greatly and benefits earned from these treatments may be lost.

(c) RECOMMENDATION:

(1) Units work through the advisory teams to strongly impress local Vietnamese officials of the need for more Vietnamese participation

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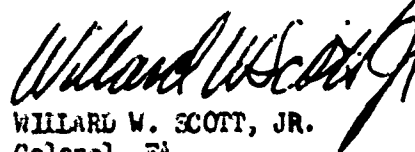
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in MEDCAPS. Joint US/Vietnamese MEDCAPS will be a necessary step before complete turnover of the program.

(2) Assigned and/or attached units should constantly make Vietnamese agencies, schools, orphanages, etc... aware of proper channels to use whenever requesting Civic Action Assistance.



WILLARD W. SCOTT, JR.
Colonel, FA
Commanding

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- 3 - CG, USARV, ATTN: AYNCC-(DST)
- 2 - CINC, USARPAC, ATTN: GPOP-DT

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AVFB-FAC (26 November 70) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned of Headquarters, 23d Artillery Group, Period Ending 31 Oct 70, RCS-CSFCX-65 (R2) (U)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM ARTILLERY, APO 96266

TO: Commanding General, II Field Force Vietnam, ATTN: AVFBC-RE, APO 96266

This headquarters has reviewed the quarterly report of Headquarters 23d Artillery Group and concurs in its content with the following exception:

a. Paragraph 2b (2).

(1) The unit will frequently not have 24 hours advance notification of a move.

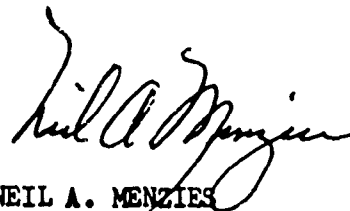
(2) Operating in established patterns provides early warning to the enemy and allows him to counter or escape the threat.

(3) An advance party requires much the same security as an entire battery and normally this additional security will not be available.

(4) Unit SOP should provide for an advance party immediately prior to occupation for mine and booby trap clearing.

b. Paragraph 2f. It is not intended that the US personnel continue to maintain and operate CFSCC/AASWCC's indefinitely. This requirement will be met by turning these responsibilities over to ARVN forces. The personnel and equipment listings in paragraph 2f (1) (c) are considered adequate as a guide.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



NEIL A. MENZIES
LTC, FA
Adjutant

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AVFBC-RE (10 Nov 70) 2d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned of Headquarters, 23d Artillery Group, Period Ending 31 Oct 70, RCS-CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

DA, HQ, II Field Force Vietnam, APO 96266 17 DEC 1970

THRU: Commanding General, US Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHDO-DO, APO 96375

Commander-In-Chief, US Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT, APO 96538

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report - Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 October 1970 from Headquarters, 23d Artillery Group.

2. (U) Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning "Need for a Container to Sling Load Perishable Items", page 14, paragraph 2e(1); concur with recommendation. However, the feasibility of building a container which would meet the requirements of both aviation and using units is doubtful.

b. Reference item concerning "Need to Establish Maintenance Priorities", page 15, paragraph 2e(2); nonconcur. The current priority system is designed to eliminate the problem stated. In the case of the generator, a unit in garrison should not use the same priority as a unit which has an immediate need for the generator to perform its mission. However, if the generator belonged to a signal unit and the unit required the generator to power its communication equipment, a higher priority should be used and the oldest job order completed first. Normally, combat vehicles are given priority over administrative type equipment for maintenance work. This headquarters will continue to monitor the priority system to prevent its abuse and to insure it serves the purpose for which it was intended.

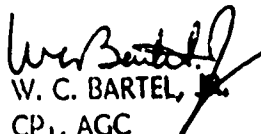
c. Reference item concerning "Greater Involvement in the MEDCAP Program by the Vietnamese", page 18, paragraph 2g(1); concur. USARV Reg 40-58 governs the conduct of MEDCAP activities. Paragraph 4c(3) specifically states that commanders must obtain RVN approval for all MEDCAP projects. Appendix I of the regulation provides guidance on the training of Vietnamese civilians in health skills. USARV Reg 40-58 is distributed to company level throughout USARV. Proper channels

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SUBJECT: Operational Report--Lessons Learned of Headquarters, 23d Artillery
Group, Period Ending 31 October 1970, RCS-CSFOR-65 (R2)(U)

for Civic Action requests are clearly defined in USARV Reg 515-1 and
these procedures are continually emphasized and monitored by Province
and District advisors throughout MR 3.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


W. C. BARTEL, Jr.
CPi, AGC
Asst AG

AVHDO-DO (10 Nov 70) 3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned of Headquarters, 23d Artillery Group, Period Ending 31 Oct 70, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

Headquarters, United States Army Vietnam, APO San Francisco 96375

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8 MAR 1971

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army Pacific, ATTN: GPDP-DT,
APO 96558

1. This Headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 October 1970 from Headquarters, 23d Artillery Group and concurs with comments of indorsing headquarters.

2. Reference item concerning "Need for a Container to Sling Load Perishable Items," page 14, paragraph 2e(1) and 2nd Indorsement, paragraph 2a: concur. Recommend that unit submit a request through command channels to CG, USARV, ATTN: AVHDO-DR, giving sufficient detail to identify the item by name, nomenclature, or required characteristics. A recommended format is contained in Annex B, MACV Directive 70-2. Unit has been so advised.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Cy furn:
II FFORCEV
23d Arty Gp



Clark W. Stevens Jr.
Captain AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

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GPOP-DT (10 Nov 70) 4th Ind (U)
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 23d Artillery Group for Period
Ending 31 October 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 31 MAR 1971

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters concurs in subject report as indorsed with the following comment: Reference paragraph 2e(1), page 14: USACDC in proposed QMDO for an external cargo transportation system for Army helicopters (4 Jan 71) has addressed the problem. A new family of containers is being developed for external lift. Containers will be able to withstand forward speeds of up to 200 knots without causing serious aerodynamics interference. As an interim, lightly loaded CONEX containers can be made more airworthy by using swivel hooks, shortening the forward retaining straps or twisting the straps to reduce lateral and aft sway.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:


L.M. OZAKI
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

Cy furn:
CG USARV

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